IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-referenced application:

1. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for processing of start-conditions processed by a computer system acting as a Workflow-Management-System (WFMS) or a computer system with comparable functionality,

said WFMS comprising at least one process-model, said process-model modeling a process comprising one or more process-activities being nodes of an arbitrary graph and directed control-connectors of said graph defining a potential control flow within said process-model; and

said method evaluating, if a target-activity representing a work item of said process may be started, by evaluating ~~the~~ a truth-value of a start-condition once truth-values of all incoming control-connectors of said target-activity have been posted;

and said method being further characterized by

comprising a timed-evaluation-step, said timed-evaluation step evaluating,

if at least a first one of said incoming control-connectors is associated with a time-interval, and

if said time-interval has been met,

and, in the affirmative case, said timed-evaluation-step ~~is~~ continuing the processing to start said target-activity even if not all truth-values of said incoming control-connectors have been posted yet,

if the truth-value of said first incoming control-connector has been posted, and

if said truth-value evaluates to TRUE.

2. (Previously Amended) A method for processing of start-conditions according to claim 1,

wherein said first incoming control-connector is associated with a commencing-activity, the commencing-activity corresponding to one of the process-activities in the process model, and

wherein said timed-evaluation-step uses as a starting point for said time-interval the point in time when said commencing-activity is completed.

3. (Previously Amended) A method for processing of start-conditions according to claim 2,

wherein said first incoming control-connector is associated with a path from said commencing-activity to said target-activity, and

said timed-evaluation-step is continuing the processing to start said target-activity,

if said associated path has been traversed.

4. (Currently Amended) A system comprising means adapted for carrying out the steps of the method according to any one of the preceding claims ~~1 to 3~~.

5. (Currently Amended) A data processing program for execution in a data processing system comprising software code portions for performing a method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims 1 to 3~~ claims 1, 2 or 3.

6. (Currently Amended) A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims 1 to 3~~ claims 1, 2 or 3.

7. (New) A computer-based process management system comprising at least one process-model, the process-model modeling a process comprising one or more process-activities being nodes of an arbitrary graph and directed control-connectors of the graph defining a potential control flow within the process-model, the system being operative: (i) to evaluate if a target-activity representing a work item of the process may be started by evaluating a truth-value of a start-condition once truth-values of all incoming control-connectors of the target-activity have been posted; and (ii) to perform a timed-evaluation-step, the timed-evaluation step evaluating:

if at least a first one of the incoming control-connectors is associated with a time-interval, and

if the time-interval has been met,

and, in the affirmative case, the timed-evaluation-step continuing the processing to start the target-activity even if not all truth-values of the incoming control-connectors have been posted yet,

if the truth-value of the first incoming control-connector has been posted, and

if the truth-value evaluates to TRUE.

8. (New) An article of manufacture for processing start-conditions processed by a computer system acting as a Workflow-Management-System (WFMS) or a computer system with comparable functionality, the WFMS comprising at least one process-model, the process-model modeling a process comprising one or more process-activities being nodes of an arbitrary graph and directed control-connectors of the graph defining a potential control flow within the process-model, the article of manufacture comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

evaluating if a target-activity representing a work item of the process may be started by evaluating a truth-value of a start-condition once truth-values of all incoming control-connectors of the target-activity have been posted; and

performing a timed-evaluation-step, the timed-evaluation step evaluating:

if at least a first one of the incoming control-connectors is associated with a time-interval, and

if the time-interval has been met,

and, in the affirmative case, the timed-evaluation-step continuing the processing to start the target-activity even if not all truth-values of the incoming control-connectors have been posted yet,

if the truth-value of the first incoming control-connector has been posted, and

if the truth-value evaluates to TRUE.

9. (New) The article of manufacture recited in claim 8, wherein the first incoming control-connector is associated with a commencing-activity, the commencing-activity corresponding to one

of the process-activities in the process model, and wherein the timed-evaluation-step uses as a starting point for the time-interval the point in time when the commencing-activity is completed.

10. (New) The article of manufacture recited in claim 8, wherein the first incoming control-connector is associated with a path from the commencing-activity to the target-activity, and the timed-evaluation-step continues processing to start the target-activity, if the associated path has been traversed.